

## 4.D. Goal Setting. What Do We Want?

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## D.1. What is *Goal Setting*?

### *Key Questions*

- What do you want?
- What do you not want?
- What would you consider a success?

### *What Is It?*

*Goal Setting* includes the steps the individuals and group take to move towards a single outcome or set of outcomes that could result from their action. *Goal Setting* is the process used to name a goal or set of goals that:

1. Can be agreed upon enough for everyone to move forward;
2. Help to guide next steps and actions;
3. Create ways which can help everyone measure success;
4. Can guide the person or people doing harm to steps and actions that would show themselves and others that they are taking responsibility to address the violence, repair the harm, and change their attitudes and behavior away from violence and towards responsibility.

### *Why Is It Important?*

*Goal Setting* sets a clear direction in which you are headed. It gives a guide to lead the way during times of confusion. It also lets others who are involved in the intervention get a better picture of what they are working towards and what is expected of them. This may also include the person doing harm.

While everyone may agree that they want violence to end, we at Creative Interventions have found that agreement often stops there. What different people mean by this and how they think that should happen can be the points of conflict that make an intervention break down. The *Goal Setting* tools help you to understand that you as individuals may come into an intervention with different ideas about goals but that these differences can be discussed and group agreement can be reached. It also helps you turn vague goals into something more concrete – so that you can have a better idea when goals are actually met.

### *Goal setting in 6 basic steps:*

*Goal setting* can take various steps including:

1. *Name goals.* Get concrete about the outcomes an individual or group wants and does NOT want – we call these desired outcomes “goals.”
2. *Name bottom lines.* Get concrete about any limits that an individual or group might have, things that they will not agree to, a line they will not cross – we call these “bottom lines.”
3. *Create group consensus.* Come together to form a group consensus or agreement regarding their goals and bottom lines (individuals may have to make compromises in order to reach agreement).
4. *Separate short-term and long term goals.* Separate immediate or short-term goals from goals that are more long-term.
5. *Prioritize most important goals.* Prioritize goals by naming one or two that are the most important goals. An alternative may be to also think about the goals most easy to achieve at least at the beginning.
6. *Turn goals into action plans.* Turn these goals into a plan of action – a plan that can be revised or changed over time.

*Different Situations May Call for Different Types of Goals:*

When setting goals, it might be helpful to also categorize the type of relationship in which the violence took place and what the relationship outcome might be. Goals may include something defining the desired relationship that you would want as an outcome of an intervention. For example, do you want to stay in close relationship with the person who did harm? Do you want to co-exist but not stay in close relationship? Do you not want to be in any kind of relationship? The different situations that violence may involve include:

1. Violence within ongoing intimate or close relationship – have the intention to stay together.
  - Goal may include staying together in a healthy relationship
2. Violence within ongoing intimate or close relationship – have no intention to stay together.
  - Goal may include separating safely
  - Goal may include being able to co-exist in the same community without staying in a close relationship
3. Violence from former relationship – have no intention to stay together or to reconnect.
  - Goal may include separating safely

4. Ongoing non-intimate relationship (coworker, friend, member of same organization) – may not stay closely connected but may still share the same community, same space or same circles.
  - Goal may include co-existing peacefully in the same community
5. Violence caused by an acquaintance in the community – not a close relationship and do not share the same space or circles.
  - Relationship may not be part of goal
6. Stranger – don't know – cannot identify the person.
  - Relationship may not be part of goal

### *What Could Goals Look Like?*

In Section 3.5. *What Are We Trying to Achieve: 3 Intervention Areas*, we introduced three basic areas of interventions. We could also say that this represents three types of goals:

1. *Survivor or victim support.* This focuses on providing for the health, safety and other needs and wants of someone who has been the survivor or victim of harm. This may also extend to children, family members, pets, and others who rely upon the survivor or victim and their well-being.
2. *Accountability of the person doing harm.* This focuses on support for the person doing harm to recognize, end and take responsibility for the harm one has caused, regarding of whether or not that harm was intended. It also includes changing attitudes and behaviors so that the violence will not continue.

If accountability or responsibility is not possible, then this may be less about accountability and more about taking steps to make sure the violence stops and will not continue.

3. *Community accountability or social change.* This focuses on working with communities to recognize the ways in which they are responsible for harm and to make changes so that harm will not continue. This might refer to harm directly caused by communities or harms that were allowed by communities that did not do enough to make sure that these harms do not happen.

Goals may be organized under one, two, or all three of these areas. This may be a useful way to think about goals.

You might also want to think of goals in more specific ways that address a particular need and that more closely match your own situation – in your own words. The following is a list of some possible areas of goals. Some of these goals may overlap – goals of ending violence may overlap with safety and so on. Some of these goals may come from the survivor of violence. Others may come from

friends, family, and community members of the survivor. Goals may also be defined by the person who has caused harm as some of these examples show.

**1. Goals about taking first steps in changing the situation of violence may include:**

- Want to tell at least one trusted person about what is happening.
- Want to contact and find out about one crisis line I can call in case of emergency.
- Want to share this Toolkit with my close friends.
- Want to make my first intake appointment with batterer intervention program to get help ending my own violence.

**2. Goals about violence may include:**

- Want the physical violence to end completely.
- Want all verbal abuse to end.
- Want my children to free from violence.
- Want to be able to argue without fearing physical violence.
- Want to be able to say “no” to sex without fear.

**3. Goals about freedom from control:**

- Want to be able to go out without having to report to my partner.
- Want to be able to get a job without threats or being called a “bad mother.”

**4. Goals about safety:**

- Want an emergency plan and at least two people I can call in case of emergency.
- Want my children to feel safe.
- Want to be able to live without fear most days of the week.

**5. Goals about relationship:**

- Want to feel like I can be in this relationship without my partner fearing me.
- Want to end this relationship completely.

- Want to end this intimate relationship but remain friends if possible.
- Want to end this relationship but be able to co-parent our children.
- Want my friends to understand the dynamics of violence and be on my side.
- Want to have some people who I can trust.

6. Goals about the way the intervention is carried out:

- Want to meet person doing harm face-to-face.
- Do not want to meet person doing harm face-to-face.
- Want the person doing harm to be dealt with in a compassionate way.
- Do not want the police to be involved.

7. Goals about what you want from the person who caused harm:

- Want them to stay away and stop all contact.
- Want them to stay away and stop all contact until safety is established.
- Want them to understand and admit what they have done.
- Want a sincere apology.
- Want repair in the form of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Want them to respect safe space by staying away from the following places:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- Want them to seek and follow through getting the following help  
\_\_\_\_\_.

8. Goals about what you want from the community (might be family, friends, an organization):

- Want the community to understand how they supported violence and admit what they have done.
- Want a sincere apology from the community.
- Want the community to adopt guidelines regarding safety and violence so this does not happen again.

### *What Are Limits or Bottom Lines?*

Bottom lines may be a limit that you draw for yourself in order to stay involved in the intervention. They might be personal limits such as the amount of time you can spend.

They might be limits to how the intervention takes place.

This Toolkit suggests that you think about whether you have any absolute limits to participation, and if so, that you make these clear so that other people know.

For example:

- I can be involved in this intervention, but I will not be meeting the person who did harm face-to-face.
- I can only meet about this on weekday evenings.
- I want to hear about the intervention so I don't get in the way of what they are trying to achieve – but I do not otherwise want to be involved.
- I will be involved but only as long as we do not commit acts of violence against the person doing harm.
- I will be involved but I do not want to report to the police.

### *Using the Tools in This Section*

The tools in this section offer guides to help you as individuals and as a group to get clearer about what you want and what you hope to get from your intervention. To begin, Tool D1. *Dealing with Strong Negative Feelings and Fantasy* helps you sort through what you really want from what is really do-able.

Tool D2. *Goal Setting Guiding Questions and Chart* can be used by individuals or groups to think through that person's goals for the intervention. Once individuals come together as a group, Tool D3. *Mapping Combined Goals Chart* and Tool D4. *Shared Collective Goals Charts* can help you move forward from individual goals to group goals that you can all stand behind. Since goal setting can at times be a complicated process, especially when you are working together as a larger group, Tool D5. *Collective Goals Summary Checklist and Next Steps* can help you put all of these goals together into one list.

Finally, Tool D6. *Turning Goals into Action* in this section helps you to move from broad goals to the concrete steps to make these goals a reality.

## D.2. Goal Setting Across the 4 Phases

In Section 3.6. *Interventions Over Time: 4 Phases*, the Toolkit introduced the idea of 4 possible phases of interventions: 1) Getting Started, 2) Planning/Preparation, 3) Taking Action, and 4) Following Up.

*Goal setting* is an important step in violence intervention. Over time, goals might change. Check in regularly with your goals to make sure that they are still what you want, to see if they are realistic and to let people you are working with stay on the same page.

### *Phase 1: Getting Started*

As you get started, your most important goals may be short-term goals, including getting immediate safety, gathering people together to help out, or finding someone to call for support.

Long-term goals can be important to set your direction and to revisit in order to see how the situation may have changed – or how your feelings about what you want may change.

If only one or two people are involved as this intervention starts, then goals may be more of an individual than a group process.

### *Phase 2: Planning/Preparation*

As you plan an intervention and possibly bring more people together, then your goals may begin to expand. You may need to get more concrete about long-term goals in order to better guide your plans. You may need to have a group process to come to consensus about goals. If you started off setting goals on your own, then the goals might expand to include the group or you may need to share your goals with others and make sure that they understand and agree with these goals.

### *Phase 3: Taking Action*

By the time the group starts to take action, it is good to have a solid set of goals with which everyone understands, agrees and remembers.

### *Phase 4: Following-Up*

As your group begins to close an intervention process or a phase of the process, you can return to goals to measure your success, to celebrate those goals you were able to achieve, and to remind yourselves of what you need to keep doing in the future.

*Related Tools:*

The process of Section 4.A. *Getting Clear* may involve getting clear about what someone's goals may be.

Tools to help with decision-making including setting goals are in Section 4.G. *Working Together*.

Tools to link goals with ways that you expect the person or people who caused harm to take responsibility for violence are in Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability*.

Tools to help you take action towards meeting goals are in Section 4.H. *Keeping on Track*.

### D.3. Goal Setting Tips

#### **1. Read *Some Basics Everyone Should Know*.**

Interpersonal violence is complicated. Although we may hear more about domestic violence or sexual assault these days, many misunderstandings still exist and many misconceptions about what it is and how to approach it. Read Section 2. *Some Basics Everyone Should Know*. Pay special attention to Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* in order to have a clearer picture of what is going on. The Section 2.3. *Violence Intervention: Some Important Lessons* also shares important basics about interventions based upon the experiences of Creative Interventions.

Share this information with others who may be involved in a situation of violence and may need some resources to help them know what to do.

#### **2. Goals may be stated in terms of what people want and in terms of what people don't want.**

Ask both what you want and what you don't want to get a more complete picture of goals.

#### **3. Do not assume that people working together share the same goals. Make the process of sharing goals a concrete one.**

Many people agree that they do not want violence – but may not agree on the details. It is important to make sure that people are clear on what their own goals are, what others name as their goals and how they can come together to agree on these goals.

#### **4. Separate fantasy goals from reality goals.**

There's room for people to dream of what they would want in an ideal world, including fantasy worlds of revenge or the fantasy of a perfect ending. This may be an important step towards getting to more realistic goals, goals that will not lead to more harm, or goals more fitting with our higher values. Take time to separate fantasy goals from reality goals. See Tool D2. *Dealing with Strong Negative Feelings and Fantasy During Goal Setting* for help.

#### **5. Goals can be and should be revisited.**

At some point, you want to settle on basic goals that you all agree to and remember. Even if these goals stay the same, it is good to keep checking in to make sure that they still make sense as the situation changes.

## **6. Remember to share goals with new people as they get involved.**

It is easy to forget to share goals or assume people have the same goals as new people get involved. Remember to carefully go through the sharing of goals to make sure that new people are aware of them – and agree to them.

## **7. Separate goals expected through the intervention from goals that might be met in another way.**

Interventions may not meet all goals. For example, people may have goals regarding emotional healing that may be partially met through having people come together for support – but may be also met through time, counseling, spiritual support, self care and other means outside of the intervention.

## **8. Anticipate conflicts in goals.**

While people will generally want a good outcome, specific goals and bottom lines might differ and even clash. The tools help individuals think about their own goals and to come together and see if people's goals: a) do not conflict; or b) can be agreed upon through compromise. If there is too much disagreement, it is possible that someone will decide to leave the intervention or the group may even disband. There are tools to help to work through these steps.

## **9. Think about what goals would be “good enough.”**

It is good to aim high in terms of goals – to think about what you really want. It may also be important to think about what is “good enough.” What could you consider a success – even if you do not reach all of your goals?

## D.4. Goal Setting Special Considerations

Goals can *come from* different individuals or groups involved in a situation of violence.

For example, goals may come from a:

- Survivor or victim
- Community allies
- Person or people doing harm
- A team of people made up of any of the above

Goals can also be *directed towards* different individuals or groups involved in a situation of violence. For example, goals may be:

- About survivor safety or well-being
- About safety of children or other vulnerable people
- About community safety or community sense of responsibility
- About person or people doing harm taking responsibility
- About person or people doing harm being supported and being safe

It can be expected that goals can be reached through the intervention. But goals may also be met through things that happen outside of the intervention.

See the Tool D1: *Dealing with Strong Negative Feelings and Fantasy during Goal Setting*, for ways on separating fantasy from reality. The move towards goals that are more in line with group values and that can realistically be reached.

### *Survivor or Victim*

Many interventions will base their goals on those stated by the survivor or the victim.

Many anti-violence organizations have a philosophy of being survivor-centered. This means that they believe that the survivor should be the person determining goals and what should be done to reach these goals.

This Toolkit does not assume that interventions will necessarily be survivor-led, although this is one possibility. Survivor or victim goals, however, are an important part of interventions. They need to be seriously considered because the survivor or victim often has suffered the most serious harm. Survivors or victims

often understand the dynamics of violence the most. The harm has often left survivors or victims with a loss of control of their lives, making control of the outcomes or goals of intervention an important part of the solution to violence.

It is important that the group not create a situation in which the survivor or victim becomes isolated and has her or his goals judged by a group that may have clearly distinct goals. At the same time, an environment in which communities allies can state their goals even if they are different or even conflict with that of the survivor should also be allowed in the space. Goal setting is ultimately a negotiating process. Community allies may easily and naturally come to recognize survivor-driven goals as their own. Or the process may lead to dialogue and discussion in which everyone's goals shift towards mutual agreement (or consensus) in which the group process actually creates collective goals that are actually better and more solid than those of any one individual.

**If you are a survivor or victim,** you may want to go through the process of thinking about your goals on your own before stating them in a group setting. You might want to ask someone to support you in that process so you can reflect on whether they really represent what you want and so you can prepare for disagreements or challenges from the group. You can think about what is very important to you and what you could open to compromise from others.

#### *Community Ally*

The community-based approach of this Toolkit also recognizes that communities are also harmed by violence and have a responsibility to challenge violence. Therefore, it is possible that goals defined by the survivor or victim may be understood and respected by community allies while also being balanced by community goals.

**If you are a community ally,** you may feel that it is most appropriate to follow the survivor or victim's goals. You may also want to think about your own personal goals and goals that might address something that is more of a community-level concern. The important piece is to be clear about what goals are important to you as an individual and be aware of how you feel about any compromises that might come about in a group process. In that way, you may be able to move forward with a good feeling about the group process and not let differences get in the way of your ability to move forward as a solid team member or part of a solid group process.

#### *Person Doing Harm*

The group may also have an opportunity to support the person doing harm in a goal-setting process that may end up happening in a separate space than that with the survivor but can ultimately come together as part of the collective goals. If it is the beginning of a process, then supporting and allowing the person doing harm to name goals that may be the opposite of taking responsibility such as

“having the process be quick,” “wanting the survivor to take equal or greater blame,” “being able to say sorry and move on” or not wanting this process at all can be stated but in a space where these lead towards more productive goals that are in line with the process that may include their accountability.

**If you are a person doing harm or are accused of doing harm,** the goal setting process may be challenging. Group goals including those of the survivor may at least at first feel unfair or oppressive. You may feel judged and feel that you have little control. You may be handed a list of group goals that you were not a part of creating but which may include things that you need to do. It may be a very difficult and yet important process to see how your own personal goals can change throughout this process. You may think about how you can name personal goals such as reflecting on why people perceive your attitudes or actions as harmful, thinking about its impact on others, taking responsibility, remaining connected to people you care about, or stopping your own pattern of violence as goals that you can achieve. It is useful to ask for and get support to help you in that process.

## D.5. Setting Goals Facilitator Notes

Helping the group to go through the process of figuring out their goals is a very important step. It can also be difficult. Your job is NOT to make everyone agree on everything but to guide the group through a process which makes agreement possible and which allows for an honest discussion of disagreements. Below are some tips in facilitating a group discussion around goal-setting.

Group goals may come from bringing together individual goals that people developed on their own outside of group meetings. You may also take time during the meeting to have people sit on their own or get together in pairs or small groups to come up with individual goals that can then be brought to the larger group.

### **1. Think about how people can reflect on individual goals in preparation for agreeing on group goals.**

Have a process either outside of the group setting or allow for individual time to reflect on goals within a meeting where people can think about and write out their individual goals.

### **2. Understand the uniqueness of survivor goals.**

Special consideration of survivor goals are important in any intervention. This is true whether the survivor is leading an intervention, is at the center of an intervention, or is taking more of a back seat.

If you have a survivor-driven process or one where the survivor is actively involved, you may facilitate in such a way that the survivor's goals are first stated and written down or shared in a way that everyone can easily understand and remember what they are. Make sure that people understand what these goals are and do not have further needs for clarification.

### **3. Help people distinguish between fantasy goals and reality goals.**

Coming in with fantasies about goals is normal. This can include fantasies of revenge or fantasies of a quick and perfect ending. You want to end up with things that are realistic and do not cause greater harm. See Tool D1. *Dealing with Strong Negative Feelings and Fantasy during Goal Setting* for help.

### **4. Consider a process where everyone can express their individual goals as a step towards reaching group goals that everyone can agree on.**

a. A process can then follow where people reflect on their own goals and see how they go along with, add to or are maybe even in conflict with these goals.

You can then have each person share and/or read out their goals. People can always pass if they feel uncomfortable.

b. Get all the goals together in a way that everyone can see them. You can ask each person write goals on a board or easel paper; or ask participants to write goals on post-its and put them up on the board or on the wall – you may think of other creative ways to put them up in a way that everyone can see them.

If you use a process where you write the goals as people speak, you can shorten the way that goals are expressed, but try to use the words/tone of the group or person who wrote or stated that goal.

c. Help the group figure out what goals are overlapping (you can mark them with a check mark or a star).

d. Help the group identify which are individual, but not necessarily collective goals. Help identify which are non-negotiable, bottom-line goals.

e. Help the group see that individual goals and bottom-lines can be maintained without getting in the way of the overall goals (you can mark with plus).

f. Help the group see how conflicting individual goals and bottom-lines can be let go of to keep a set of goals that everyone can agree to (you can mark with question mark).

g. Help the group to identify and clarify collective group goals. Expect that there will be some changing of minds and explanations to help convince others.

h. Double check to see if the group can agree to the goals. See if there are remaining question marks and whether these can be crossed off or reworded into pluses or checks.

i. Make sure to write down these collective group goals/bottom-lines and any questions or concerns that arise. You can return to these later.

### D. 3. Goal Setting Real Life Stories and Examples

#### **Story D: Community Responds to Domestic Violence**

Two years ago, I was married to a man who I'd been with for ten years prior, and our relationship had troubles. Over the last year of our marriage, my former partner was going through training as a police officer, and at the same time, we had just relocated to a new state. We were struggling with some large issues in the marriage, and things had gotten more difficult. I just became increasingly afraid of someone that I used to feel really safe with.

I have three kids who were ten, six, and four, and they were witnessing a lot of arguments, a lot of loud screaming, a lot of doors being slammed, a lot of things that I felt were really unsafe for them to see. My home just felt more and more dangerous. I felt scared to leave the house. I felt scared to come home. I felt scared to sleep in my bed.

The last straw came one night when I had gone to a friend's house and my partner followed me in his car. And when I arrived at my friend's house, he pulled up and got out of the car and was yelling and screaming horrible things at me. I felt very afraid, but I didn't know what to do. I knew wherever I went, he would follow me. So I decided I would go to my office which was nearby, and it was night time so there wouldn't be anybody there. When I finally got inside, I waited for a few minutes and he left.

I called a friend, who came and met me at my office, and she suggested that I call another friend who had a house I could go to while we figured out what to do, so that's what I did. When we got there, everybody sat around in the living room and just reassured me that it was safe for me to be there, that they were welcoming of it, that they understood. I was at this point on the run from someone who was furious and had a gun, and I *still* felt bad. I felt like I was exposing people to something that I couldn't control, something I was terrified of. But I didn't know what else to do at that point, and they were saying it was where they wanted me to be.

My friends asked me if there were any people that I could gather up, that I could call, that might be support from in this time. I guess I should say that being part of this, this community organization which is committed to ending sexual violence which meant that we had a way of responding that I knew people would come together. I knew if I needed help, people would come and talk to me and we could work it out together. So it didn't feel strange to meet, to call people and say, "Hey, I need help, and this is what's going on."

And at the same time, experiencing these things in my home felt like people would see me differently; people would judge me; people would think I was a hypocrite; people would think I was weak. And I remember being really troubled

by that the first few days. But I got reassurances from folks that that was exactly what the point of the organization was, and that experiencing harm is not about being strong or weak, that experiencing harm just is. It's what we choose to do about it that's important.

So we made phone calls, and asked people to come over. We had seven or eight people come over and just started talking through what to do. At that point it felt totally overwhelming. I was still on, "Is this really happening to me?" and, "What can I do to make it okay?" rather than thinking of anything beyond tomorrow, or next week.

But I think my wants were something like: I want to be in my home; I want my kids to feel safe; I think I said, "I want him to leave."

I think those were basically it at that moment, and then we just brainstormed what needs to happen right now in the next hour, in the next day, in the next week, for those wants to happen. We walked through it so if I want to be in my home, how do we make that happen? How do we make sure that that's a safe space? And, I think one of the answers to that question was, at least in the near future, having folks be there with me.

So we eventually set up a schedule. We put out an email with a schedule for the week, and blanks for people to fill in, and I was amazed that people did fill it in. And they did come by. They came by every day and they came and sat in my living room, and they brought food, and we just sat together. I was amazed at that. That was how we got home to be a safe space for me again.

When we were thinking about whether to call the police or not, I did feel like I needed some help in calming the situation down, but I didn't know what to do, because if I can't call his friends on the job, and I can't call them in...It doesn't seem right to call them in an unofficial way, because who knows what's going to happen with that. And calling them in an official way doesn't necessarily seem like it's going to produce any certain results either.

So we tried to think about who could talk to him. And we figured out some people in the community that he could talk to, if he was open to doing that. My mom talked to him, and she was willing to deal with him. He was totally raging, and for whatever reason she was not intimidated at all and just was able to talk to him really calmly.

I had people checking on me, people staying during the daytime hours, sometimes overnight for the next week, and it just felt good. It felt so good to have this full house, you know, this busy house of people coming by, and, you know, people were playing with the kids, and we were making art in the kitchen, and someone was always making tea, and it felt not alone.

In terms of talking about successes, I guess the biggest one is that I did get all three things that I wanted, that I identified as wants to happen. That my kids went through that time feeling safe; that he did leave the house; that I was able to return home; and that all that happened in a fairly short amount of time. So in terms of success, I'd say, ultimately for me as a survivor, those were the most meaningful successes.

Another success in terms of communication was that we made a phone list immediately. That was one of the first things we did so I always knew I had someone to call. And people would call and check on me. At that time, I think it was hard. I was worried about people burning out. I was worried about people feeling overwhelmed by me and my stuff.

So I didn't have to constantly, hour by hour, be reaching out for needs to be met because we'd identified them beforehand and there were enough people involved. It felt like no one was carrying all of it, or more than they could. It certainly wasn't that things didn't feel hard. It felt really bad. I think what was helpful was this wasn't an intervention where it was like, "How are we going to get him away from me? It was like, "How are we going to make sure that there's not harm happening in our community? How are we going to make sure that we've done our best to address that? The problem was consistently the harm. The problem was consistently the events or the behaviors, or the things that were harmful that were happening, but not *him* that was a problem – not that my choice to stay as long as I had was a problem.

That made it possible for me to feel like I could come into the space and say what / needed which at that time really included not being someone who was perpetrating harm against him by engaging the power of the state whether or not it would have benefited me in that moment. It could only have had negative effects on him.

And then I got to make a decision about what do I really need right now to do my work, to take care of my kids, to get through this day, to heal.

We need to trust people to be the experts on their own lives and to take them seriously and have faith in people to set the course for working from harm to transformation. I think that comes best from people who are experiencing harm and have a vision for themselves about what they want. And to give people time to identify what that is and be willing to sit with the discomfort of not being able to rescue somebody in a simple or quick way. I think that those values were ultimately the most healing for me.

(Adapted from the transcript from *Community Responds to Domestic Violence* available from StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP)  
[www.stopviolenceeveryday.org](http://www.stopviolenceeveryday.org). The story is also available in downloadable audio mp3 on the same website)

## Section 4.D. Tools Cover Sheet

## Goal Setting Tool D1. Dealing with Strong Negative Feelings and Fantasy during Goal Setting

It is common for people to have strong negative feelings, fantasies or unrealistic expectations linked to goals about situations of harm. At some point during the goal setting phase, it is good to let a full range of feelings be expressed no matter how far fetched they may seem to you. Considering the entire range of goals generated in response to a situation of harm may help people to be able to express strong negative feelings and fantasies – as well as other goals that may be more realistic.

For example, the survivor may express goals such as:

- I wish the person doing harm were dead or experience the same harm they did to me.
- I wish the person doing harm could be publicly humiliated or hurt so that they would know they could never do this again.
- I wish this had never happened to me.
- I wish that I would feel the same as before this ever happened.

Allies may express:

- I wish the survivor would have walked away.
- I wish the survivor would cut off all contact with the person doing harm.
- I wish the survivor would just move on.
- I wish someone else would deal with this.

The person doing harm may want things like:

- I wish everyone would just forgive me and forget about this.
- I wish everyone would understand that I was under a lot of pressure and cut me some slack.
- I wish everyone would know that the survivor deserved it – anybody would have done the same thing if they were in my shoes.
- I wish this had never happened.

**While extreme responses and fantasies may be normal, we ask you to think about the following in assessing whether or not you want to pursue a goal:**

- Values. Does this goal fit your values?
- Risk assessment. Will pursuing this goal lead to more harm to yourself or others, retaliation, and so on?
- Realistic or achievable. Is it actually possible to achieve this goal?

## Goal Setting Tool D2. Goal Setting Guided Questions and Chart

These are some basic questions you can think through in moving towards goals. They can be asked individually or as a group.

If this process is survivor-driven, that is, if the process will prioritize the goals of the survivor, then this may be focused around the survivor's or victim's needs and desires. Others can also look at this and think about these questions for themselves as individuals and also focus on the needs of the survivor and the community.

### *Guided Questions*

What do I want?

- For myself
- For the survivor or victim (if I am not the survivor or victim)
- For other important people (children, other family members, friends, organization, etc.)
- For the person doing harm (if I am not the person doing harm)
- For the larger community (it may be useful to name who we mean by the community)

What do I NOT want? (You can use the categories above)

What is important to me? This can be values or ways in which things will happen or people.

What are the most important wants (or goals)?

Is there anything that is an absolute “must have” or “must do”?

Is there anything that is an absolutely “must not”?

**Did I think about things like: safety, financial needs, connection to people or relationship, other things that are important to me?**

**Do these goals fit with my values? Is there anything I would add or leave out after thinking about this?**

**Are some more achievable than others? Which are most achievable? Is there anything I would add or leave out after thinking about this?**

**Will pursing any of these goals lead to more harm to myself, the survivor or victim, the person doing harm, or others, retaliation, and so on? Is there anything I would add or leave out after thinking about this?**

**What goals might be fantasies? Is there anything I would add or leave out after thinking about this?**

**What would I consider a success?**

**What goals would I consider “good enough?”**

**Can I divide these goals into long-term and short-term? (If that makes sense, you can do that)**

### Goal Setting Chart

After answer the guided questions, see if you can write your goals in the following chart. The chart will be easier to refer to and share with others.

Goals/Wants – or – Don't Want  * if necessary or very important	For Whom	Is this goal realistic? Yes; Maybe; No	Short-term or Long-term	Anything Else?
I want:				
I don't want:				
Limits or Bottom- Lines:				

Remember that Limits or Bottom lines may be a limit that you draw for yourself in order to stay involved in the intervention. They might be personal limits such as the amount of time you can spend. They might be limits to how the intervention takes place. (See *What Is Goal Setting?* for more about Bottom Lines).

### Goal Setting Tool D3. Mapping Combined Goals Chart.

After the individuals involved in the intervention have had a chance to complete their goals worksheets, this chart can be used to help compile the individual answers and help begin to develop shared goal as a group.

Goals Brainstorm	Individual Goals	Goals specific to survivor	Goals specific to person doing harm	General Goals
List everyone's goals here	List things that seem like an individual's goals (add name or initials to show whose)	List things that are specific to the survivor	List things that are specific to the person doing harm	List things that are related to the intervention rather than a specific person
Bottom-Lines Brainstorm	Individual Bottom-Lines	Bottom-Lines specific to survivor	Bottom-Lines specific to person doing harm	General Bottom-Lines
List things that are must-haves about the results or the process (can mark with +) or must-not-have (can mark with -)	List things that seem like an individual's goals (add name or initials to show whose)	List things that are specific to the survivor	List things that are specific to the person doing harm	List things that are specific to any other person, group, organization, etc

## Goal Setting Tool D4. Shared Collective Goals Chart.

After mapping the group's goals, you can use the chart below to document the "final" goals that the group agrees to collectively for the situation of harm. This chart should be used as a reference point and should be revisited often, as changing conditions or participants may cause the initial set of goals to change over time.

### **GOALS**

#### **Agreed-Upon Goals**

You can list all  
agreed-upon goals

#### **Agreed-Upon**

#### **Bottom-Lines**

You can list all  
agreed-upon  
bottom-lines about  
the results or the  
process here

#### **Goals/Bottom-Lines**

#### **Conflicts, Disagreements or Questions**

You can list all  
conflicts,  
disagreements or  
questions here

#### **Goals/Bottom-lines**

#### **Need more information**

You can list all goals  
which need further  
information or need  
input from people  
not in room here

## Goal Setting Tool D5. Collective Goals Summary Checklist and Next Steps

Once the group has gone through the process of coming up with collective goals, you can use this checklist to figure out next steps. The key question is: Do we agree enough to move forward?

Check the box if you as a group:

- Have enough agreement on goals to move forward
- Can live with any goals or bottom-lines that might be essentially important to one person but not to everyone in the group
- Do not have conflicts or disagreements in goals so serious that you cannot move forward
- Do not have conflicts or disagreements in bottom-lines so serious that you cannot move forward
- Do not need more information which is likely to significantly influence goals or bottom-lines

If you check all boxes, you can move ahead and fill in next steps, who is responsible and timeline

### *Goals Next Step Timeline*

Next steps	Who is responsible	Timeline or other conditions

*Significant Conflict on Group Goals and Options for Moving Forward*

If you DO NOT check all boxes (You do not have agreement or consensus right now), you may consider the following options:

Option 1. Plan another meeting (people reflect in-between):

Yes       No

If “yes”, where is the next meeting, when will it be? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be able to make it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who cannot make it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For those who cannot make it, how can they give their input? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What should everyone be thinking about before the next meeting? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What if anything should people bring to the next meeting? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Option 2. Plan another way to continue building agreement or consensus:

Yes       No

If “yes”, what means will you use to communicate (email, phone, in-person meetings, etc.) ?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who will coordinate results? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will make sure everyone gets the results? \_\_\_\_\_

How will you know when you can move on? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Option 3. Someone with goals or bottom-lines which block full agreement decides that they can live with the group goals and bottom-lines even though they do not fully agree.**

Yes       No

If “yes”, are there any requests or ideas about revisiting these disagreements later? If so, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Option 4. Need to get more information.**

Yes       No

If “yes”, what information do you need? \_\_\_\_\_

How will you get it? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will get it? \_\_\_\_\_

How will they communicate that information back to the group? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are the next steps? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Option 5. This group disbands at this point.**

Yes       No

If “yes” and you disband, will a different team be formed (may still include some of the same people)? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If “yes” and you disband, agree upon ways in which people will leave the process without creating more harm. (For example, it could cause more harm to tell certain people that agreement could not be reached – this could give an impression that no one will address, stop or prevent harm. It could also could increase harm and/or increase vulnerability for the survivor or victim or others involved in the planning of this intervention)

Safety and confidentiality questions to ask:

Who can know about this process so far? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who cannot know about this process so far? \_\_\_\_\_

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Any other safety measures that should be followed? \_\_\_\_\_

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Any other considerations that should be followed? \_\_\_\_\_

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List agreements:

If “yes and you disband,” acknowledge and recognize ways in which some of you may continue to address the situation independently. If so, are there ways in which you can still remain in contact and offer support? Or conditions under which you may come back together?

List ways some of you may continue to address the situation:

## Goal Setting Tool D6. Turning Goals into Action

A key to making an action plan is to turn goals into action. Take each goal which the group has agreed to. You can include goals which are more personal or individual as long as nobody disagrees with or blocks that goal (See earlier Goal Setting section for creating collective goals). Some goals may also be broken up into more than one action step.

*Chart: Making Goals into Action (by goal)*

Goal	Action Step (Can be more than one step for each goal)	Who Is Responsible for Action	How Do We Know It Is Done? What Does It Look Like?